United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/577
7 February 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar expresses "hope for an immediate end to the suffering of the civilian population" in the eastern part of Beirut where Red Cross and other humanitarian organizations "are not allowed to perform their humanitarian duties".

+ The Economic and Social Council, continuing its organizational session for this year, hears (Tuesday, 6 February) a proposal by the "Group of 77" developing countries to convene a ministerial meeting of the Council to discuss the impact of East-West relations on the global economy.

+ President Samdech Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia announces that as of 3 February, Democratic Kampuchea is to be called "Kampuchea" in Khmer, "Cambodge" in French and "Cambodia" in English, and no longer "Democratic Kampuchea".

+ Committee on Crime Prevention and Control introduces (Tuesday, 6 February) in Vienna a draft resolution which would have the Economic and Social Council call upon all Member States to adopt and implement United Nations standards in crime prevention and criminal justice.

+ States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women elects (Tuesday, 6 February) 12 new members to its 23-member expert body charged with reviewing compliance with the 1979 Convention providing for equal rights for women.

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A recent round of fighting in Lebanon's civil war has prompted the Secretary-General to follow the "reports of continuous fighting in the eastern part of Beirut, where Red Cross and other humanitarian organizations are not allowed to perform their humanitarian duties". According to his Spokesman, "he very much hopes for an immediate end to the suffering of the civilian population".

(more)

For information media—not an official record

According to reports, at least 274 people have been killed and 1,200 wounded since last week when the latest round of fighting broke out.

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The Economic and Social Council, continuing its organizational session for this year, heard (Tuesday, 6 February) a proposal by the "Group of 77" developing countries to convene a ministerial meeting of the Council to discuss the impact of East-West relations on the global economy.

The representative of Bolivia, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, proposed that next year the Council should discuss as an urgent and emerging issue: "The impact of the recent evolution of East-West relations on the world economy, in particular on the economic growth and development of developing countries." He suggested that discussion of that theme should take place at a special meeting at the ministerial level, which should be held at the second regular session of the Council in July next year. The Group of 77 proposed that the Council invite the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to ensure adequate preparation for that special meeting.

The Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, Antoine Blanca, in a statement made at the session, said that while there was still some debate on the main components of the transition towards democracy in Eastern Europe, it was obvious that the rearranging of economic structures and their integration into the world economy would have far-reaching implications.

First, in the short term, there would be some diversion of financial aid resources from developing countries to Eastern Europe. Second, there was a need for analytical work in assessing the "peace dividend" that might arise and how the United Nations could assist in the establishment of a coherent framework to benefit from those developments; and third, it was important to ensure that the transition in these countries took into account and gave due attention to the social aspects of development.

He went on to say that the special session of the General Assembly on international economic co-operation in April 1990 should provide the occasion for addressing persistent problems, such as the debt burden, high interest rates, the deterioration of terms of trade and threats to an open international trading system.

* * *

The Permanent Representative of Cambodia has sent a declaration by his country's President Samdech Norodom Sihanouk to the United Nations Secretary-General in which the President announced that as of 3 February, Democratic Kampuchea is to be called "Kampuchea" in Khmer, "Cambodge" in French and "Cambodia" in English, and no longer "Democratic Kampuchea". Also, the national flag of Cambodia is no longer the red flag of Pol Pot-Khmer Rouge, but the traditional flag of the Cambodian nation.

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(more)

The Economic and Social Council would call upon all Member States to adopt and implement United Nations standards in crime prevention and criminal justice under a draft resolution introduced (Tuesday, 6 February) in the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control in Vienna.

The Council would further request that the Secretary-General ensure, through the Department of Public Information (DPI), the widest possible dissemination of United Nations standards and emphasize the significant role of the United Nations regional and interregional institutes and regional commissions in promoting United Nations standards in crime prevention and criminal justice.

As the Committee continued its general discussion of the implementation of the recommendations and conclusions of the Seventh Crime Congress, many speakers stressed the importance of ensuring that work on victims' rights continued and that the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power was implemented. Several said developing countries were victims of ecological crimes which they could do little to combat. Others said a clear division needed to be made between the victims of ordinary crimes and the victims of abuse of power.

* * *

States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, at a meeting yesterday (Tuesday, 6 February), elected 12 new members to its 23-member expert body charged with reviewing compliance with the 1979 Convention providing for equal rights for women.

In an opening statement, delivered on behalf of Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, Chafika Selami-Meslem, Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, said the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women was still waiting for 68 reports to be submitted to it by States parties. Nevertheless, she continued, it should be pointed out that the quality of the second periodic reports continued to improve.

The meeting of States parties follows a two-week session of the Committee (22 January to 2 February), a group of 23 experts on women's affairs who serve four-year terms in their personal capacities.

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READEX FICHE

United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/578
8 February 1990

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General announces "World Summit for Children", to be held in New York, 29-30 September.

+ Secretary-General appoints Maurice F. Strong as Secretary-General of 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

+ Sub-Committee on Small Territories of Special Committee on decolonization begins organization of its work for this session.

* * *

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar today announced a World Summit for Children, to be held at Headquarters on 29 and 30 September. At a press briefing today, he said six Heads of State from around the world had taken the initiative of calling for an extraordinary meeting to follow up on the General Assembly's adoption last November of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Secretary-General said "the purpose of the World Summit for Children" was to bring attention and promote commitment, at the highest political level, to goals and strategies for ensuring the survival, protection and development of children as key elements in the socio-economic development of human society".

The initiators of the World Summit expect that it will result in a declaration of commitment to achieving these goals in the 1990s. It is also hoped that the Summit will accelerate ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

* * *

The Secretary-General announced today the appointment of Maurice F. Strong as Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be convened in 1992. Mr. Strong was Secretary-General of the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment and the first Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

(more)

For information media—not an official record

He is currently Chairman of Stroevest Holdings in Canada, Chairman of the Council of the World Economic Forum, Geneva, and President of the World Federation of United Nations Associations.

From 1985 to 1986, Mr. Strong was Executive Co-ordinator of the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations in Africa. He has also served in a number of capacities in various Canadian and international corporations.

* * *

The Sub-Committee on Small Territories of the Special Committee on decolonization began organizing its work for this session today.

The Committee, in 15 meetings scheduled from now until the end of April or early May, will take under consideration 13 Territories: Pitcarin, American Samoa, Guam, Tokelau, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, United States and British Virgin Islands, Bermuda, Turks and Caicos Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Anguilla and St. Helena.

The Sub-Committee Chairman, Ghazi Joma of Tunisia, in a statement made at the meeting, said 1990 marked the first year of a decade dedicated to the total eradication of colonialism. Thus, the year should be marked by new initiatives, aimed at finding original solutions adapted to the situation of each Territory.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/579
9 February 1990

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council considers Cuban complaint of "harassment of and armed attack on Cuban merchant ship" by United States Coast Guard vessel.

+ Constituent Assembly in Windhoek approves by consensus the Constitution for independent Namibia.

+ Stephen Lewis, former Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations, appointed as Special Representative for United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

+ Meeting of senior officials of United Nations and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to discuss emergency assistance programmes in Horn of Africa, in Nairobi.

* * *

The Security Council met this morning, at the request of Cuba, to consider "the harassment of and armed attack on a Cuban merchant ship in the Gulf of Mexico" by a vessel of the United States Coast Guard on 31 January.

Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada of Cuba, current President of the Council, vacated the chair to address the Council as a representative of his country.

He said that the merchant ship "Herman" in its voyage had not come close to areas where the United States had any responsibility. It had been in international waters, yet had been harassed by aircraft of the United States and attacked by a unit of the United States Coast Guard. An attempt had been made to sink the ship.

Why had not Washington agreed to an inspection by Mexican authorities? The United States conduct had been authorized by a Panamanian official whose credentials were still questionable. No agreement between Panama and the United States justified the action which had been taken.

The representative of the United States, Alexander F. Watson, said the type of operation carried out by the United States Coast Guard was standard

(more)

For information media—not an official record

and an essential component of the battle against international narcotics traffickers. It was Cuba that had violated international law by ordering a Cuban crew to resist lawful inspection. Cuba's obstruction of such an inspection called into question its publicly stated commitment to fighting drug trafficking. Fidel Castro himself had observed publicly a week ago that the United States had searched Panamanian flag vessels with Cuban crewmen on other occations, and Cuba had raised no protest. Cuba had demonstrated blatant disregard of legitimate law enforcement efforts to investigate and interdict illicit narcotics trafficking in the region.

* * *

The Constituent Assembly in Windhoek approved today by consensus the Constitution for an independent Namibia.

The Assembly, convened after United Nations controlled and supervised elections last November, had already set 21 March as independence day. Its next and final meeting will be on the evening of 20 March, where it will elect the President of an independent Namibia.

Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said today that he warmly welcomed these developments which augured well for the future of the people of Namibia. He said he would continue to report to the Security Council in the framework of the ongoing implementation of the United Nations plan for independence in Namibia.

* * *

Stephen Lewis, the former Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations, has been appointed as a special representative for UNICEF.

Mr. Lewis was Canadian Ambassador to the United Nations from 1984 to 1988. Subsequently, he was appointed by the Secretary-General as his special adviser on African Recovery and Development, a role he will continue to fulfil.

As special representative for UNICEF, Mr. Lewis will spend several months each year in support of UNICEF's efforts to bring children's issues and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular the special needs of children in Africa, to the widest possible audience. He will contribute to the task by representing UNICEF at high-level meetings, by taking major speaking engagements, and by being available for other special assignments.

One of Mr. Lewis's first assignments will be to lead the UNICEF delegation at Namibia's independence celebration.

* * *

A meeting of senior officials of the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was held in Nairobi today.

(more)

The purpose of the meeting was to keep all concerned apprised of the latest developments affecting emergency assistance programmes in the Horn of Africa, to facilitate the resolution of problems encountered and to ensure continuing close co-ordination. These programmes seek to assist the several million people severely affected by civil strife, severe drought and food shortages in Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan.

Participants included senior staff from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNICEF, the World Food Programme (WFP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and ICRC.

A further meeting is planned for Nairobi in early April.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/580
12 February 1990

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar welcomes the release of Nelson Mandela as does President of General Assembly Joseph N. Garba.

+ Secretary-General sets up task force today for a possible United Nations operation in Cambodia.

+ Special Committee on United Nations Charter begins three-week session.

+ Thirty-three United Nations staff leave for Nicaragua to initiate phase three of United Nations Observer Mission for the Verification of the Elections in Nicaragua (ONUVEN). Elections scheduled to begin on 25 February.

+ Economic and Social Council ends its organizational meeting last Friday.

+ Experts from United Nations Commission on Human Rights begin investigation into living conditions in Namibia and treatment of the Namibian people by the Government of South Africa.

+ Preparatory Committee for the General Assembly's Special Session on Narcotic Drugs opens second session.

* * *

The Secretary-General has warmly welcomed the release of Nelson Mandela, who was set free Sunday after more than 27 years in prison.

He said the freeing of Mr. Mandela, together with the measures already announced by South Africa, marked "a turning point in the process for the peaceful settlement of the South African situation".

The Secretary-General said he hoped this "positive move" by South African President F.W. De Klerk would be followed without delay by the lifting of the state of emergency and the release of remaining political prisoners. He said

(more)

For information media—not an official record

the measures so far announced by the South African Government met a number of the objectives contained in the Declaration on Apartheid which was adopted by consensus at the special session of the General Assembly last December.

The Secretary-General also expressed hope that the momentum for peace created by these measures would accelerate the dismantling of the apartheid system and its replacement by a non-racial democracy. He expressed confidence that Mr. Mandela would play an important role in advancing such a democratic process.

The President of the General Assembly, Joseph N. Garba of Nigeria, applauded the release of Mr. Mandela, calling it "most propitious and of immense significance" towards realizing the desired objective of peacefully attaining a non-racial and democratic South Africa.

Mr. Garba warned, however, that it would be most "ill-advised and counter-productive" for any Member State of the United Nations to comtemplate the lifting of sanctions against South Africa now.

He said the lifting of sanctions should be considered only after the state of emergency had been fully lifted, all remaining political prisoners released, and meaningful negotiation commenced among all people of South Africa in order to end the apartheid system.

* * *

A task force has been set up by the Secretary-General to oversee the technical aspects of a possible United Nations operation in Cambodia. According to the Secretary-General's Spokesman, the task force is similar to the one set up for Namibia.

The idea of a temporary United Nations administering authority in Cambodia, pending free elections, gained momentum last month when the five permanent members of the Security Council met in Paris to discuss the situation and came up with a declaration favouring a role by the United Nations to ensure the internal security of the country during the transition.

The Spokesman for the Secretary-General said the permanent members had met separately today with the Secretary-General and Rafeeuddin Ahmed, Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for South East Asia, to discuss "a number of matters relevant to a possible United Nations participation in a Cambodia operation".

According to the Spokesman, the Secretary-General welcomed initiatives of the Five which conveyed the urgency of the problem and their commitment to the achievement of a settlement. The Secretary-General told them the United Nations was ready to assume any appropriate role in Cambodia which was agreed upon by the parties and approved by the Security Council. He emphasized that a mandate given to the United Nations should be "realistic, defined clearly, and capable of being readily realized in operational terms".

(more)

The Secretary-General also said that he would be sending a special representative, most likely Mr. Ahmed, to Jakarta, for a meeting at the end of this month with members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the four parties, as well as Viet Nam, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and France.

The meeting of the five permanent members of the Security Council today was in preparation for a meeting to be held in early March in Paris on Cambodia.

* * *

The Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization began a three-week session today by hearing statements by the representatives of Romania and the German Democratic Republic. In addition, it adopted the agenda for its current session and elected Andreas Mavrommatis, of Cyprus, as Chairman.

Carl-August Fleischhauer, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, opening the meeting, said the maintenance of international peace and security and the peaceful settlement of disputes affected the very purpose of the United Nations. The role of the Organization, which the Committee must strengthen, raised highly sensitive questions, at the core of which was the question of the advancement of the role of law in international affairs.

The representative of Romania, addressing the changes that had taken place in his country, said that the new Romanian foreign policy would serve the essential objective of stabilization and help place "new Romania" among the ranks of civilized nations were a priority.

The representative of German Democratic Republic said the last General Assembly session had demonstrated the great importance of the United Nations. Peace-keeping and peace-making roles of the Organization should be developed universally, and concrete steps towards developing fact-finding capabilities should be clearly based on the Charter, and encompass the entire scope of the main bodies of the United Nations.

* * *

The Economic and Social Council, ending its organizational meeting last Friday, 9 February, has decided that it would consider the recent evolution of East-West relations and its impact on the economic growth of developing countries at its Geneva session on economic questions in July.

Wrapping up its four-day organizational meeting, the Council also decided that it would meet in special high-level session next year to follow up its consideration of those changing relations on the developing world.

A four-week session on social issues will be held in May at Headquarters, followed by the Geneva session on economic questions in July.

(more)

Among the issues to be taken up at the Council's first session on social issues are racism, human rights, social development and narcotic drugs. During the second session on economic questions, the Council will consider the revitalization of the Council, natural resources in the occupied Arab territories, trade and development, an international development strategy for the 1990s, transnational corporations, international economic and social policy, disaster relief and new and renewable sources of energy.

The Council also urged all members of the international community to contribute generously to the relief of seven South Pacific countries and Territories (Samoa, American Samoa, Niue, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Wallis and Futuna) struck last week by cyclone Ofa, which left 25,000 people homeless and destroyed 60 per cent of housing.

In addition, the Council, acting on a request by the representative of Liberia, recommended that its Committee on Development Planning consider Liberia's eligibility for inclusion on the list of least developed countries.

* * *

A group of experts from the Commission on Human Rights are conducting an on-the-spot investigation this week into living conditions in Namibia and the treatment of the Namibian people by the Government of South Africa. The group, composed of experts from Zaire, Austria, Chile, India, the United Republic of Tanzania and Yugoslavia, will gather first-hand information from 12 to 17 February, concentrating mainly on developments which have occurred since January of last year.

The ad hoc group was established by the Human Rights Commission in 1967 to monitor and report on the situation of human rights in South Africa and Namibia.

* * *

The Preparatory Committee for the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly on drugs (20- 23 February, New York) began its second session this morning by hearing a statement from the Director-General of the United Nations Office in Vienna and Co-ordinator for United Nations Drug-Related Activities, Margaret Anstee. She said Member States should make a serious attempt to bridge the resource gap constraining the implementation of the Organization's mandates to combat narcotic drug use and trafficking.

Conservative preliminary estimates for the five-year period 1992 to 1997 indicated, she said, a $33 million shortfall in system-wide drug control resources and a $7 million gap for United Nations drug control organs.

She assured Member States that the system-wide plan to combat narcotic drugs, recommended in October 1989 to outline specific activities of the United Nations system on drug control, would allow the effective management and delivery of funds, and she expressed hope that Governments would immediately inject the necessary resources into the system.

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Also addressing the session, Giuseppe Di Gennaro, Executive Director of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, proposed two possible ways the international community could act to help the developing world rid itself of the drug problem; one was bilateral intervention and the other multilateral intervention. He said a major reason for the lack of success in the fight against drug abuse and trafficking was the interference of political problems.

Amelia Dozzi, Chairman of the Non-Governmental Organization Committee on Narcotics and Substance Abuse, said non-governmental organizations could make substantial contributions to the international fight against drugs.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/581
13 February 1990

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Five permanent members of the Security Council conclude consultations on Cambodia conflict.

+ Withdrawal plan of United Nations Transition Assistance Group in Namibia finalized.

+ Board of Trustees of International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women begins annual session in Santo Domingo.

+ Special Committee against Apartheid expresses "profound joy" at the release of Nelson Mandela.

+ Committee on Invisibles and Financing related to Trade of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) concludes one-week meeting on insurance.

* * *

The five permanent members of the Security Council met in New York Sunday and Monday (11-12 February) to continue the consultations initiated at Paris in mid-January on resolving the Cambodia conflict.

Discussions have focused on two key issues, the modalities of peace-keeping, including military aspects, and the administrative structure during the interim period.

On the first issue, they agreed that essential to an effective United Nations operation was the verified withdrawal of foreign forces, the establishment of a cease-fire, the cessation of outside military assistance and the regrouping and cantonment of the armed forces of the fractions into designated areas.

They agreed on the need to create a climate of trust and confidence which would facilitate resolution of military issues and in this regard they discussed the question of disarming all the factions.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

On the second issue, the Five discussed a number of options related to the establishment of a Supreme National Council, the status and functions of a United Nations administration and the question of the existing regimes.

Given the enhanced role envisaged for the United Nations in the settlement progress, consultations were held with Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar and other senior officials of the Secretariat to discuss the details of such an enhanced role. The Five welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to establish an intra-Secretariat task force on Cambodia under his chairmanship to facilitate contingency planning for a United Nations role in the settlement process.

In view of the progress made, it was agreed to resume consultations among the Five at the vice-ministerial level in Paris during the first half of March.

* * *

The withdrawal plan of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia has been finalized following the visit to that country by Marrack Goulding, Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs, and Major-General Timothy Dibuama, Military Adviser to the Secretary-General, according to a spokesman at United Nations Headquarters today.

As UNTAG's mandate expires with the independence of Namibia on 21 March, all UNTAG regional and district offices are to be closed to the public as of that date. All civilian staff will have left Namibia by 30 March except for a small administrative unit which would remain to finalize the disposition of property and related details.

The spokesman further said the UNTAG police would be reduced by one third by late February or early March, and the remaining two thirds would leave between 26 March and 7 April.

On the military side, two thirds of the 300-member military observer unit had already left Namibia, the spokesman said, and the remaining one third was scheduled to depart by 30 March.

The approximately 4,000 UNTAG infantry personnel would begin withdrawing immediately after independence and it was expected that they would all have departed by 8 April.

* * *

Ten years of policy-making in research, training and information on women and development is being discussed by the Board of Trustees of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), which has begun its annual session in Santo Domingo. The INSTRAW, which is celebrating its tenth anniversary this year, implemented some 26 programmes during the last biennium, for approximate expenditures of

$2.4 million. The Board will examine a progress report on the Institute's work last year and approve its proposed programme of work and budget of some $3 million for 1990 and 1991.

The programme includes, among other things, environment and sustainable development, and the production of training materials on rural development and financial policies. Publication of a review aimed at academic audiences has also been proposed.

Research, training and information on women in development have been steadily gaining in importance as a means of securing pragmatic development action for the benefit of women and the entire population, and INSTRAW has been actively involved in those activities. Last year the Institute developed a methodology for improving the role of African women in the informal sector of the economy, a statistical data base on aging women in Latin America and the Caribbean, financial policies for improving women's access to credit, and sets of training courses on women's role in entrepreneurial and managerial activities in industry. The Board of Trustees is INSTRAW's policy-making organ. Its 11 members are nominated by Member States and appointed by the Economic and Social Council to serve in their individual capacities for a three-year term.

The INSTRAW, an autonomous institution within the United Nations system, is funded entirely by voluntary contributions. It was established to carry out research, training and information activities world-wide to promote women as key agents of development.

* * *

The Special Committee against Apartheid has expressed profound joy at the release of Nelson Mandela.

In a statement, the Acting Chairman of the Committee, Jai Pratap Rana of Nepal, called Mandela's release a "victory for the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, and for all the people and Governments around the world which for years have fought for his freedom".

The Committee said that Mr. Mandela's freedom, however, would remain incomplete until the majority of the South African people could enjoy equality, dignity and justice. To this end, it called for the "prompt implementation of the remaining measures required for the establishment of a climate conducive to negotiations as stated in the United Nations Declaration on South Africa" to support the South African people in their effort to build a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

The Anti-Apartheid Committee also called upon the international community at this critical juncture to use all effective measures to encourage the South African regime to eradicate apartheid promptly, and to support the democratic forces in the country in the drawing up and adoption of a new constitution based on the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Committee also sent a telegram of congratulations and support to Mr. Mandela in South Africa.

* * *

The Committee on Invisibles and Financing related to Trade of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) concluded last Friday (9 February) a one-week meeting on insurance and reinsurance by adopting a resolution aimed at strengthening the domestic insurance sector in developing countries. The Committee, however, was unable to reach full agreement on a draft resolution introduced by the "Group of 77" developing countries on the key issue of reinsurance security.

There remained important differences between the participating countries as regards the types of information that should be made available in developing countries for helping them to choose reliable reinsurers. Consequently, the Committee was unable to adopt a resolution on the issue of reinsurance security.

Negotiations on a proposal introduced by the Group of 77 on other insurance topics were successful. The resolution adopted by the Committee "urges developing countries to continue to intensify their efforts to promote and consolidate their domestic insurance sectors".

Other provisions of the resolution aimed at enhancing co-operation among developing countries, with a view to increasing business exchanges in the field of insurance and reinsurance, as well as to improving insurance supervision and training. The latter should also be promoted through continued technical assistance provided by all countries in a position to do so, as well as by non-governmental organizations.

The UNCTAD secretariat was called upon to take the necessary steps to prepare a detailed programme for the education and training of qualified supervisory personnel in developing countries.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/582
14 February 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Cambodia task force to be chaired by Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

+ Preparatory Committee for General Assembly special session on drug abuse control recommends adoption of a programme of action and a declaration.

+ Committee for Crime Prevention and Control adopts draft calling for a declaration on action and co-operation in the fight against crime.

* * *

The task force announced last Monday to oversee the technical aspects of a possible United Nations operation in Cambodia is to be chaired by Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

According to a United Nations spokesman, in the Secretary-General's absence, the task force will be chaired by his Special Representative for Humanitarian Affairs in South-East Asia, Under-Secretary-General Rafeeuddin Ahmed.

Other members of the task force include the Secretary-General's Chef de Cabinet, Virendra Dayal; Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs, Marrack Goulding; Acting Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management and United Nations Controller, Luis Maria Gomez; and Military Adviser to the Secretary-General, Major-General Timothy Dibuama. The Spokesman's office will also be represented at the meetings.

* * *

The Preparatory Committee for the General Assembly's special session on drug abuse control recommended this morning that the Assembly adopt a programme of action and an international declaration on drug abuse control when it opens its four-day special session next Tuesday, 20 February.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

The Committee, concluding its three-day session, recommended an agenda consisting of a general debate on drug abuse control, followed by subjects relating to the production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as international co-operation and the allocation of "sufficient resources within the United Nations system to ensure that adequate priority is given to narcotics issues".

The Assembly would also review international instruments on drug abuse control, including the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. In addition, it would consider new agreements relating to drug abuse control.

In his concluding remarks, the Chairman, of the Committee, Peter Hohenfellner of Austria, announced that intensive consultations would be held over the next few days to prepare a draft programme of action and declaration for the Assembly's approval next week.

* * *

Serious crime affecting individuals, communities and nations is becoming more pervasive within countries, and is increasingly transcending national frontiers, according to a report before the United Nations Committee for Crime Prevention and Control, currently meeting in Vienna.

The report calls for international assistance to help countries deal with problems of national and transnational crime through the creation of a genuinely effective international crime and justice programme and, eventually, an international convention.

During the debate, most speakers supported the idea of beginning work on a convention on crime prevention and control, saying it would be a way of focusing attention on the crime prevention programme. Others felt it was preferable to devote attention to the direct strengthening and development of existing United Nations crime prevention programmes and bodies.

Those supporting the convention were divided as to what it should contain and what it should aim to achieve. They agreed that it should have the effect of focusing greater political and community attention to the need for a strengthened international effort against crime.

The current session of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control concludes on Friday, 16 February.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/582/Corr.1
16 February 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

CORRECTION

In Press Release DH/582, issued on 14 February, the third paragraph should read as follows:

"Other members of the task force include the Secretary-General's Chef de Cabinet, Virendra Dayal; Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs, Marrack Goulding; Under-Secretary-General and United Nations Legal Counsel Carl-August Fleischhauer; Acting Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management and United Nations Controller, Luis Maria Gomez; and Military Adviser to the Secretary-General, Major-General Timothy Dibuama. The Spokesman's office will also be represented at the meetings.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/583
15 February 1990

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General says the "time is long overdue" for Afghanistan's leaders to put the nation's interest above all others.

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Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said today that although one year had passed since the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, "Afghan refugees continued to suffer outside their own country, and the Afghan people as a whole continued to be victims of a war where military might had produced no victor".

In a statement issued today at Headquarters to mark the first anniversary of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the Secretary-General said that "the time was long overdue for the Afghan nation to look to the future and for its leaders to put the interest of the nation above all others, and lead the people out of their present suffering. It is in a state of affairs which no nation should bear and, unfortunately, one that many in the international community may have forgotten".

He said that in his intensive contacts with all segments of the Afghan population and the Governments concerned, he was encouraged by the growing commitment to a political solution of the Afghan question. He welcomed the process of constructive dialogue that had begun between the two guarantors and by the neighbouring countries to narrow the gap between the positions taken, not only be them, but by the countries neighbouring Afghanistan.

The Secretary-General appealed to the international community not to forget the Afghan people at "this crucial stage of their history" and "to provide generously" the financial and material resources that would be needed for a speedy repatriation of the Afghan refugees and the economic and social reconstruction of the country.

The United Nations was fully committed to continue and to intensify its activities to meet the needs of the Afghan people, he concluded.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/584
16 February 1990

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General welcomes agreements reached at drug summit in the Colombian city of Cartagena.

+ Secretary-General launches emergency relief assistance to 140,000 refugees in Somalia next six months.

+ Special Committee against Apartheid marks the release of Nelson Mandela; hears statement by the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly.

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Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar today welcomed agreements reached at a four-nation drug summit in the Colombian city of Cartagena. The agreements included those on crop substitution and economic aid to drug-producing nations.

In a statement, the Secretary-General said he considered the agreements to be a good indication of strengthened regional co-operation, constituting a good augury for the special session of the General Assembly next week.

The Secretary-General was confident, the statement continued, that the special session would reaffirm, at the highest political level, the need for international co-operation, through the United Nations, to fight the drug scourge.

* * *

The Secretary-General, responding to an appeal by the Government of Somalia, has decided to launch an Extraordinary Interim Emergency Programme in the northwestern districts of Somalia to provide emergency relief assistance to 140,000 refugees for the next six months.

This emergency measure has become necessary in view of prevailing insecurity in the affected areas. These circumstances prevented the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme

(more)

For information media—not an official record

(WFP) from continuing humanitarian assistance to refugees because standard operational requirements of such assistance could not be met. The suspension of the regular programmes of UNHCR and WFP became effective last October. Both agencies stressed that humanitarian assistance to refugees in the affected district would be resumed as soon as conditions allowed.

The Emergency Programme represents an exceptional humanitarian initiative undertaken by the Secretary-General, on the understanding that it will be of limited duration. Two thousand metric tons of food aid will be provided each month to 140,000 refugees and other beneficiaries. The UNHCR and WFP are to use their "good offices" with donors to obtain the necessary resources.

Independently from the Emergency Programme, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) envisages, at the end of the Programme's six month duration, to expand its current humanitarian programmes for internally displaced persons to include refugees.

In addition to the new Interim Emergency Programme, the United Nations is currently implementing in Somalia a refugee repatriation programme under tripartite operational arrangements and an ICRC medical and emergency nutritional assistance operation for war-affected persons in the area.

* * *

The Secretary-General said today that the liberation of Nelson Mandela was not "an end in itself, but a milestone in the democratic process which must lead to the liberation of the people of South Africa from the system of apartheid".

At a special meeting convened to mark the release of Mr.Mandela by the Special Committee against Apartheid, he said it was now a practical possibility that, working together, the people of South Africa would be able to establish a non-racial democracy with equal rights for all. This had been a primary aim of the United Nations, and its realization was now within reach.

The President of the General Assembly, Joseph N. Garba (Nigeria), said he found it proper to acknowledge the courage of Mr. De Klerk and his efforts so far to fulfil the promises he made when he was a candidate for the President of South Africa.

Mr. Garba said that Mr. Mandela's release, as important and crucial as it was to the eradication of apartheid, was just a part of a larger process of ending apartheid peacefully. It would be "ill-advised and counter-productive" for any Member State of the General Assembly to contemplate the lifting of sanctions against South Africa at this time.

Also speaking at the meeting, the newly elected Chairman of the Committee, Ibrahim Gambari, of Nigeria, acknowledged the "encouraging steps" taken recently by the Government of South Africa. However, he regretted the recent announcement by the British Government of its unilateral relaxation of a number of measures against South Africa.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/585
20 February 1990

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ General Assembly's special session on "The Question of International Co-operation against Illicit Production, Supply, Demand, Trafficking and Distribution of Narcotic Drugs" begins in New York; hears calls for international action against traffickers, more funding of United Nations programmes and socio-economic measures.

+ Secretary-General tells Assembly that drug abuse is "top of the list of priorities" requiring urgent attention from the international community. President of General Assembly, Joseph N. Garba of Nigeria, also speaks.

+ Secretary-General is "deeply grieved" at report of two dead and six wounded in Nepalese UNIFIL contingent following unprovoked shooting incident Monday in Lebanon.

* * *

Calls for concerted international action against drug traffickers, increased funding for United Nations drug abuse programmes and the adoption of economic and social measures to curb the supply and demand for illicit drugs were heard by the General Assembly this morning as it opened its four-day special session on "international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances".

The session is considering a report by the Secretary-General concerning the development of a United Nations system-wide plan of action on drug-abuse control and a report by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs on enhancing the role of the United Nations in the fight against illicit drugs.

In his report, the Secretary-General outlined several steps needed to combat the drug problem, including the strengthening of the drug-control system, treatment and rehabilitation of addicts, and the financing of organizations within the United Nations system for programmes of technical co-operation to the developing world on the issue.

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For information media—not an official record

Last year, the report says, the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control spent $43 million running 115 projects in over 50 countries. This year, it estimates expenditures of $69 million, but the requirements of the developing world far exceed that amount.

The Secretary-General also estimates that, in order to achieve the goals that have been established, an overall amount ranging from $35 million to $50 million might be required on a biennial basis.

The first speaker this morning, Julio Londoño Paredes, Minister of Exterior Relations of Colombia, called on the international community to assist his nation in fighting the drug war by adopting measures to strengthen the economies of developing nations.

He said a long series of divergent and often contradictory opinions on the drug issue were now dwindling. The prevailing simplistic idea that only the drug-producing nations should seek a solution to the drug problem was being replaced with the idea that the drug problem was one of supply and demand, production and consumption, and required a concerted international effort. Addressing the issue of drug demand was essential and was finally being recognized as such, as was witnessed at the Cartegena summit last week.

He said the battle against drugs should respect the principles of national sovereignty and non-intervention.

The time had come to set up a working group to embark on an analysis of drug problems and to develop a global plan of action to deal with the drug scourge. He said the basis for such a plan had been introduced by Colombian President Virgilio Barco in his statement last September before the General Assembly and further elaborated on at the eleventh special session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna and the preparatory meetings for the current special session.

Determined action was useless, he continued, unless action was taken against the production and export of chemicals used to prepare drugs, against money laundering, and against corrupt police and officials who in some countries facilitated illicit drug trafficking.

The United States was the biggest consumer of drugs, he said, and had come to realize its responsibility in fighting the drug war. The Cartagena Summit had stressed the spirit of co-operation. The United States had shown itself ready to give economic support to Colombia, he said, and there were millions of men and women awaiting concrete action to implement the offers made. If action in international economic co-operation was not forthcoming, there would be a groundswell of frustration which would be harmful to fighting the drug war.

The Minister for Justice of Ireland, Ray Burke, addressed the Assembly on behalf of the 12 member States of the European Community. He said the Twelve

(more)

had intensified their co-operation in the narcotics area, and had, on the initiative of President François Mitterrand of France, recently established a high-level group of co-ordinators on drug issues.

Mr. Burke said the fight against drug-related crime would continue to be pursued through the framework of the Trevi Group, which was composed of Ministers of Justice and of the Interior, as well as representatives of relevant State agencies. At a meeting of Trevi Ministers in December last year, it was agreed to bring pressure against drug traffickers by strengthening controls at external frontiers, developing a network of liaison officers and investigating money-laundering offences.

The Minister from Ireland said the European Community was committed to co-operating with developing countries and to supporting the effective implementation of international instruments on a universal basis. He called for the "fullest possible co-operation" at all levels to reinforce the existing system of control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

He said that if the United Nations was to play a leading role in the f_ght against drugs then the increased resources necessary to allow it must be provided. He urged the special session to send a clear message to allocate a higher proportion of the regular budget to the drugs area.

United States Secretary of State James Baker, addressing the Assembly's special session, said that "even as we heed the cry for freedom and democracy, we must not fail to hear another cry", the call of the drug addict.

He outlined the national drug strategy of the United States, saying that it called for an attack on the drug problem in all its aspects -- consumption, illicit production, treatment and rehabilitation. Since the Bush Administration took office, he said, the domestic anti-drug budget had increased 67 per cent to $7.6 billion. The United States international anti-drug budget had also increased by 73 per cent to $3.1 billion.

Secretary of State Baker said that by going to the Cartagena Summit, President Bush had demonstrated the absolute determination of the United States to fight the drug war and to support Bolivia, Colombia and Peru in their anti-drug efforts. From fiscal years 1989 to 1991, the United States would increase sevenfold its international drug budget for the three Andean nations.

He said that together at Cartagena the four nations had reaffirmed the need for development, trade and investment to strengthen growth-oriented economic policies in order to offset the economic cost of anti-narcotic programmes. And, they had agreed to strengthen the law enforcement capabilities of their countries to bring traffickers to justice.

The United States and its Andean colleagues also had agreed to urge all countries to ratify as soon as possible the United Nations Convention against

Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. He announced that the United States had deposited the signed instrument of ratification with the United Nations today.

* * *

The threat posed by drug abuse meant personal tragedy, severe damage to health, the disruption of society, economic breakdown, the undermining of democratic institutions, corruption, intimidation, violence and death, Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said today.

In statement at the opening meeting of the special session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General also said drug abuse was at the top of the list of priorities requiring urgent attention from the international community.

The Secretary-General said legal instruments drawn up over the years culminated in 1988 with the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. The Convention provided measures more far-reaching than ever before to enable Governments to deprive traffickers of their ill-gotten gains and deny them safe havens anywhere in the world. That Convention was still not in force. The Secretary-General urged countries to ratify it without further delay.

Although he did not wish to play down the importance of bilateral assistance, he said bilateral anti-drug actions could be hampered by political concerns. That was not the case with a multilateral approach. The United Nations, because of its international status and its basic Charter principles, served no single country and played a neutral and objective role which must be strengthened.

The Secretary-General said extrabudgetary resources greatly in excess of what was currently available were also needed, particularly for the field operations financed by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control.

Joseph N. Garba (Nigeria), President of the General Assembly for its special session, asked that the international community make clear to the "merchants of death" that their evil path would lead only to their destruction and that they would be given no sanctuary anywhere in the world. He said the international campaign against drug abuse should concentrate on both the supply and demand sides, and that the economic and social aspects of the problem -- including drug rehabilitation and treatment -- should be addressed.

* * *

A police position of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in the southern part of that country was attacked Monday evening by the South Lebanese Army (SLA).

According to a United Nations spokesman, one officer and one private soldier from the Nepalese battalion were killed and six were wounded, one seriously, in the shelling of an area nine kilometers north of Naqoura. The

UNIFIL investigated the incident and was convinced that the firing originated from SLA positions in the Israeli-controlled area and was about to lodge a protest with the Israeli Army.

Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar, in a statement issued today, said he was "deeply grieved" to receive the report on the killings in the unprovoked shooting, and that "this serious and tragic incident again underlines the risks to which United Nations peace-keepers are exposed in their service for peace".

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/586
21 February 1990

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ General Assembly continues second day of special session on illicit drugs, hearing renewed appeal from Trinidad and Tobago for an international criminal court to deal with drug trafficking.

+ Ad Hoc Committee of Assembly's special session begins consideration of global programme of action against illicit drugs. Heard statements yesterday by the Mayor of New York, David Dinkins, as well as representatives of United Nations bodies and specialized agencies.

+ Three soldiers from the Irish contingent to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) were reported to be wounded in an exchange of fire with armed men, believed to be from the Amal militia, two of whom probably were killed.

+ Crime Prevention Committee ends session.

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Guillermo Larco Cox, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Peru, this morning in the General Assembly rejected the view that coca production was helping to "reactivate" the Peruvian economy, as the greatest profits in the cocaine trade derived from processing and commercialization that took place outside Peru.

The Prime Minister expressed the hope that the Cartagena Summit, attended last week by his own country and Colombia, Bolivia and the United States, would serve to stimulate the establishment of anti-drug mechanisms among other parties, particularly since drug traffickers targeted by the Cartagena participants would try to make use of other markets, even in countries which did not now see themselves at risk.

Many of the other speakers' statements this morning indicated that the special session itself was a sign of the dangerous magnitude of the global drug problem and, in that light, past positions -- which were largely attempts to place the blame for the problem on certain countries -- were being put aside in favour of new levels of international co-operation. In connection

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with anti-drug efforts, Arthur N.R. Robinson, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, this morning renewed his country's appeal for an international criminal court to deal with drug trafficking. "The gravity of the situation demands no less a response from the international community", he said.

* ** *

The Ad Hoc Committee of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly this morning began consideration of a global programme of action against illicit drugs.

The draft programme of action calls for the use of the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control, adopted in Vienna in 1987, to be used by national authorities and interested organizations as a basis for developing and translating into action balanced strategies to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

The draft action programme deals with such questions as prevention and reduction of drug abuse to eliminate demand; the treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug addicts; control and supply of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; suppression of illicit trafficking; and measures to be taken against the laundering of drug money, including use of the banking system.

Among the speakers yesterday, as the Committee met to elect its Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur, were the Mayor of New York City, David Dinkins, as well as representatives of United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations that have received a standing invitation to participate in the work of the General Assembly.

Mr. Dinkins said New York was embarked on a long-term effort to develop and implement a comprehensive anti-drug strategy. Citing what he called remarkable changes over the 45 years of the history of the United Nations, he said "let us resolve that together ... we can make the world's drug challenge the next global victory of unity and progress".

Margaret J. Anstee, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Co-ordinator of all United Nations drug-control related activities, said that if the international community were to resolve to release savings of a mere 1 per cent of the estimated value of the current total global defence expenditure, a massive $10 billion per year would become available to help eradicate from communities drug abuse, poverty and every kind of social deprivation.

Giuseppe Di Gennaro, Executive Director of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, said that never before had there been the opportunity of having a global strategy established and agreed upon by the international community. He called for sufficient attention to be given to the financial aspects of a global programme. He concluded: "Should you address a strong appeal to Governments and parliaments for more generous financial contributions, then the needed breakthrough could occur."

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Information was received at the United Nations today that there had been a clash between soldiers from the Irish contingent in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and militia men believed to be from the Amal militia. The exchange of fire reportedly resulted in the wounding of three Irish soldiers.

According to a United Nations spokesman, the Irish troops returned fire and were then informed that two of the Amal militiamen were killed.

Contacts were established with the Amal leadership to defuse the tension. The Amal leaders explained that their actions were based on a misunderstanding.

The spokesman said the wounded soldiers were now in satisfactory condition in a hospital in Naqoura.

* * *

A draft model treaty for the prevention of crimes that infringe on the cultural heritage of peoples was among 11 legal instruments approved by consensus by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control, as it concluded its eleventh session on Friday, 16 February.

Under the draft resolution containing the model treaty, the Secretary-General would be asked to establish an international centralized computer data base containing descriptions of cultural property, such as archaeological objects or parts of historical monuments, that could be the subject of illicit import or export. The data base would also include national and international legislation on the protection of such property.

The other legal texts, recommended for adoption by the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime, to be held in Havana from 27 August to 7 September, range from treaties on extradition and mutual assistance to transfer of supervision of foreign offenders and transfer of proceedings in criminal matters.

Also recommended for consideration by the Congress were 10 draft resolutions concerning such matters as terrorism, urban crime, the protection of the environment and treatment of prisoners.

By consensus, the Committee recommended that the Eighth Congress give favourable consideration to the establishment, under United Nations auspices, of a world foundation on crime prevention and assistance to victims.

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CORRECTION: The second paragraph of the Tuesday Highlights issued yesterday, 20 February (Press Release DH/585) should read: "For the system-wide plan of action, the Secretary-General estimates that, in order to achieve the goals that have been established, an overall amount ranging from $30 million to $35 million might be required on a biennial basis."

United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/587
22 February 1990

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ President of Security Council, on behalf of its members, states they are "pleased that the leaders of the two sides in Cyprus" have accepted the Secretary-General's invitation to meet with him for an extended session beginning on Monday, 26 February.

+ General Assembly continues third day of special session on illicit drugs hearing numerous calls for "concerted international action".

+ Secretary-General and President of Czechoslovakia meet at Headquarters.

+ Ad Hoc Committee of Assembly's special session approves draft political declaration, as well as draft programme of action to deal with the illicit cultivation, production, distribution, trafficking and use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

+ Special Committee on Charter of United Nations and on Strengthening Role of Organization takes note of report on draft handbook. Hears statements concerning peaceful settlement of disputes.

+ Anti-Apartheid Committee calls on British Government not to destroy world unity against apartheid "through premature unilateral action".

* * *

The President of the Security Council, on behalf of its members, stated today that they were pleased that the leaders of the two sides in Cyprus had accepted the Secretary-General's invitation to meet with him for an extended session beginning on Monday, 26 February, to complete the work on an outline of an overall agreement, as agreed last June.

In the statement, issued today at Headquarters, the Council members expressed their appreciation to the Secretary-General for his briefing on the current situation concerning Cyprus, and gave their full support for his efforts to assist the two communities to reach a just and lasting solution.

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The Council members stressed the importance they attach to an early negotiated settlement of the Cyprus problem.

They called upon the two leaders to demonstrate the necessary goodwill and flexibility and to co-operate fully with the Secretary-General so that the talks would result in a major step towards the resolution of the Cyprus problem. They requested the Secretary-General to report back to the Council at the end of the forthcoming meeting to inform them of the results achieved and of his assessment of the situation at that time.

* * *

The General Assembly heard a number of speakers this morning, including Government ministers from four countries, as it began the third day of its four-day special session devoted to "international co-operation against illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances".

Many speakers said that although the primary responsibility for action against drug abuse and trafficking lay with individual countries, the breadth of the problem and the power of the illicit drug industry -- which one representative said had assets equal to the oil industry -- made it clear that no State could stand alone and that "concerted international action" was a necessity. The United Nations, all speakers agreed, was the most appropriate forum for such action.

Many speakers also stressed the complexity of the drug problem and said all its facets must be addressed -- production, consumption and transit, in addition to the social and economic conditions that bred demand and supply. Along those lines, Tarja Halonen, Minister for Social and Health Affairs of Finland, was among those who said the demand and supply of narcotic drugs could be reduced by providing alternative sources of income to the producers and by improving their living conditions -- through road-building, housing, schools, provision of electricity and sanitary facilities, as well as developing health care and welfare services.

She also noted that, in Finland's development co-operation efforts with Afghanistan, the so-called "opium poppy clause" was applied, which ensured that co-operation programmes should not support or benefit the illegal production of opium. She proposed that the clause be extended to cover all forms of illegal production of narcotic drugs. "Development co-operation programmes should be planned so that they do not -- not even indirectly -- support or benefit illegal production of narcotic drugs", she said.

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Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar and President Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia met at Headquarters today in New York.

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According to the Secretary-General's Spokesman, the main subject of their discussions was the situation in Central Europe, both from the political point of view with regard to the democratization process in that region, and from the economic point of view.

President Havel also informed the Secretary-General of his country's intention to play a more active role in United Nations activities.

Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Jiri Dienstbier informed the Secretary-General of the agreement initiated in Prague earler today, prior to President Havel's visit to Moscow next Monday, on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia.

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The Ad Hoc Committee of the special session of the General Assembly approved a draft political declaration yesterday, as well as a draft programme of action, to deal with the illicit drug problem. The Committee is expected to adopt its report to the Assembly on Friday.

Under the programme of action, the General Assembly would call for activities to eliminate demand, including setting up national strategies, analysis of the causes of demand, and use of information and education programmes. The United Nations role as an advisory centre for collecting, analysing and disseminating information and experience would be enhanced. The draft programme calls on States to become parties to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, enabling its early entry into force.

The draft political declaration approved by the Ad Hoc Committee concerns international co-operation against drugs. Also, Member States would proclaim the period from 1991 to 2000 the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse.

* * *

The Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization this morning considered and took note of the progress report of the Secretary-General on the draft handbook on peaceful settlement of disputes between States.

Statements concerning the peaceful settlement of disputes were made when the Special Committee met yesterday. Among the speakers, the representative of the United Kingdom said the subject of peaceful settlement of disputes was being considered in the Charter Committee itself and the General Assembly's Legal Committee. There was need for Member countries to rationalize the United Nations' work on that subject and to avoid duplication of effort. Also, his Government would contribute $50,000 to the International Court of Justice Trust Fund. The French representative told the Committee the important work on peaceful settlement of disputes was now under way in the

European Economic Community (EEC), and that at the present stage, the most noteworthy progress would emanate from the working group the General Assembly had decided to set up within the Legal Committee.

The United States hoped, in due course, to find a basis that would be broadly supported within the international community for the acceptance of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. The Soviet Union said it was interested in the utilization of all peaceful means for the settlement of disputes, including those that might be compulsory. It had accepted the jurisdiction of the International Court concerning any type of international dispute and had withdrawn its reservations on an entire series of agreements concerning the Court's role.

Cyprus said the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes was vital for small nations such as Cyprus, where, in many cases, recourse to the application of international law and strict adherence to the principles and purposes of the Charter were the only remedies afforded those countries.

* * *

The Special Committee against Apartheid has called on the British Government not to destroy world unity against apartheid through its "premature unilateral action" to relax sanctions against the South African regime.

Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria, the Special Committee Chairman, said in a statement today that the intentions of the British Government to relax anti-apartheid measures were reiterated on 20 February at the conclusion of the EEC ministerial meeting in Dublin. The Special Committee strongly believed that present conditions in South Africa were still far from justifying any relaxation of international pressure on the South African regime. On the contrary, at this critical junction, all "concerted and effective measures" should be applied on Pretoria to ensure a speedy end to apartheid, Mr. Gambari said.

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